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Margin:

*A Journal of Design
Collaboration and
Experimentation
Vol / 02*

A PROJECT OF WHITE MATTER
STUDIO COLLABORATIVE

MARGINJOURNAL.COM

ISBN 978-1-312-24733-8



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MARGIN
v02
JUNE 2014



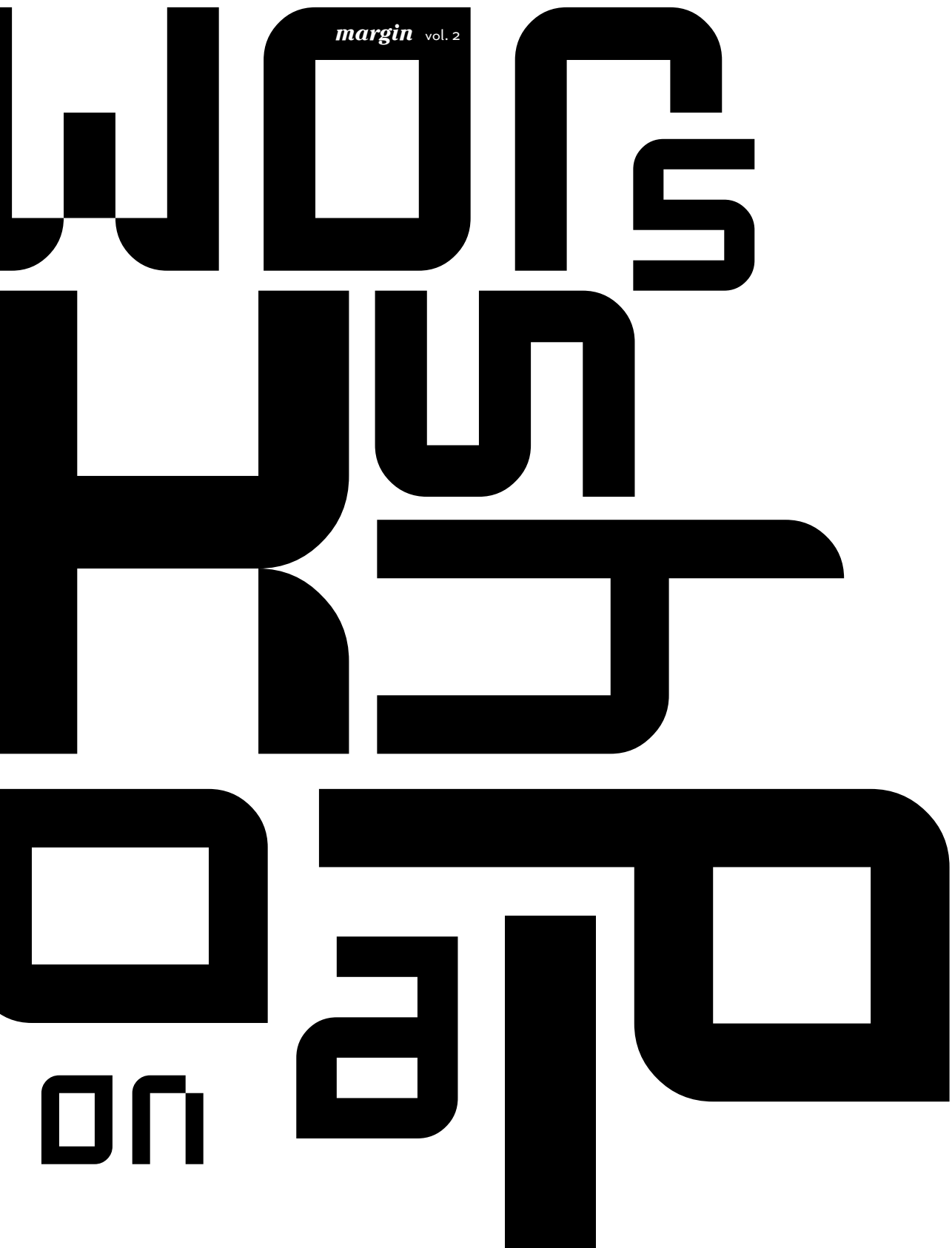
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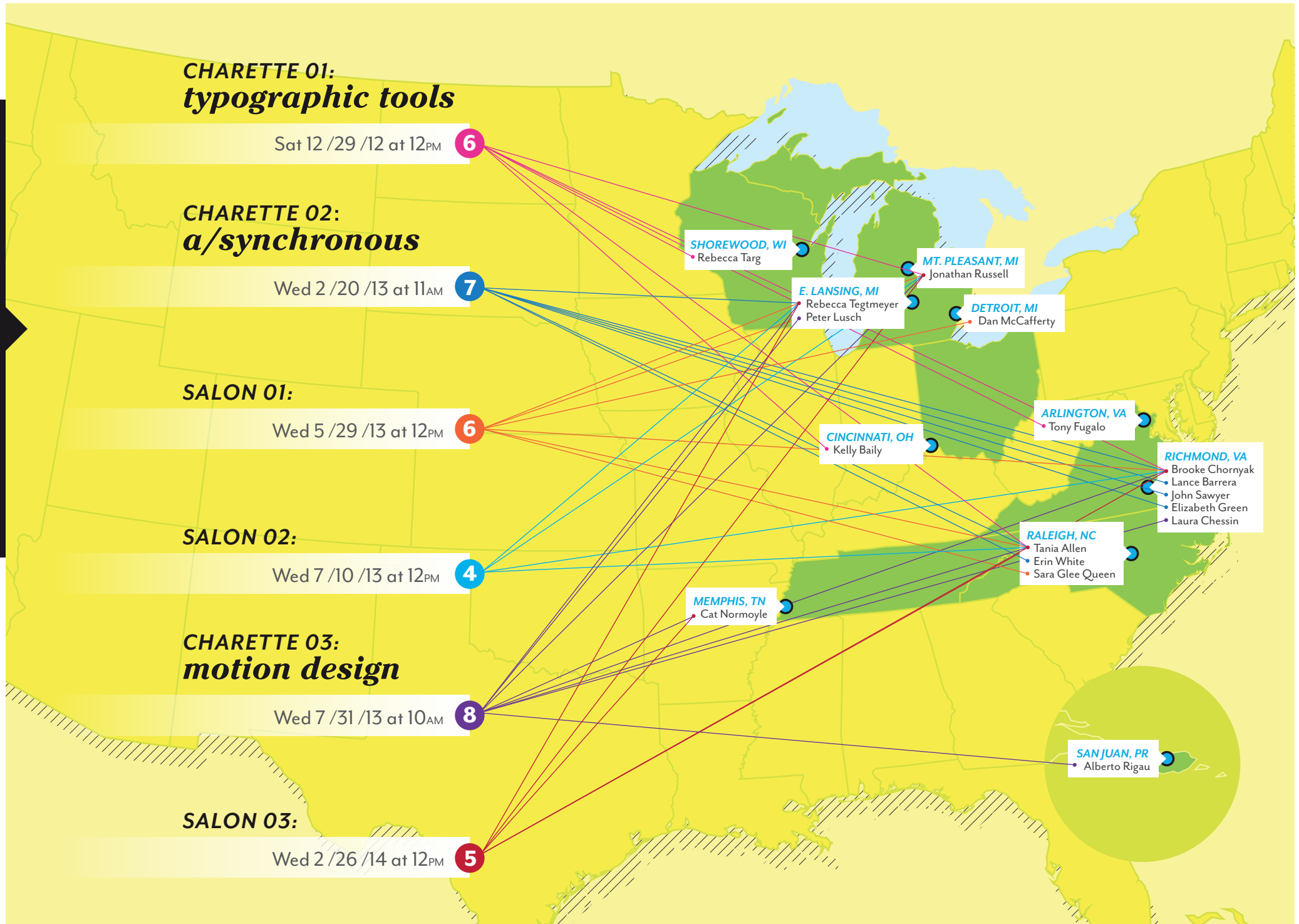
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preface

Margin is an experimental online and limited edition print journal devised with the intention of exploring how and what it means to collaborate in our transient digital environment. The work presented in this journal is based on half a dozen conversations and workshops focused on creating the conditions to collaborate. A large number of terms such as participatory design, co-creation, co-design, crowdsourcing, brainstorming, are often used to describe collaboration, but are they truly collaboration in practice? That is one of the driving questions we sought to undertake, though not at first. This project began with the assumption that collaboration was invaluable in design and that online environments afforded great opportunities for design collaboration. What we found through the initial engagements in online workshops was that more often than not, the analysis and conversation that arose focused on defining and understanding collaborative processes more so than designing collaborative experiences. Author, Clay Shirky writes, “Flexible, cheap, and inclusive media now offers us opportunities to do all sorts of things we once didn’t do” At our fingertips, we all have tools that grant us the agency to easily connect, share, upload, build works together. Nevertheless, can we call all these participatory practices, such as wikipedia for example, collaborative projects? There are many existing definitions to these terms and our inquiry does not seek to define what collaboration is, rather it attempts to bring focus as well as scrutiny to the tools and conditions of design practice that are used for collaboration.

We began Volume 2: *Design Matchmaking*, thinking more explicitly about how different environments afford and encourage collaboration. By thinking of technology as a mediator between two entities, we were attempting to extend its potential to expand, contract, shift and transform dialogue, meaning and work. We were also exploring the potential of this mediating entity to keep us connected as a possibly working environment, as we grow more divided geographically. We acted upon these assumptions by developing several research projects out of existing work that would benefit from a collective wisdom. These first workshops were structured as creative exercises

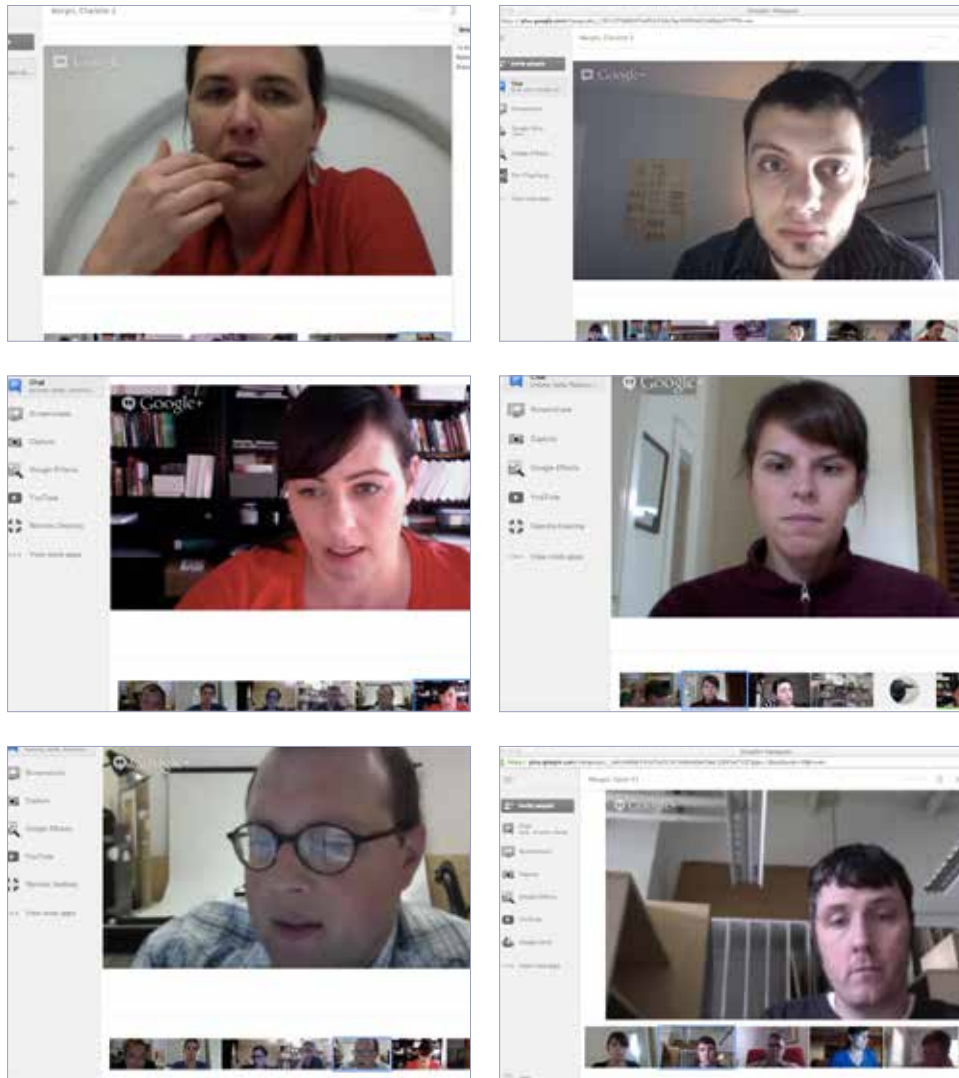
facilitated by the mediator of Google chat. In these gatherings we constructed a typeface negotiated through a given typographic tool, we engaged in responsive layering and iterative progress with video and still imagery both found and constructed by the group. But, through these activities, we repeatedly collided with the limits of the technology we were using and the comprehension that we had differing definitions on what collaboration was.

In an effort to pull back and address the divergent comprehensions of collaboration, the editors set up a series of Salons. The lunchtime Salons were held on Google Hangout as well, and became a place for a more dialectical discussion on the collaborative process in design. These conversations were comprised of three to eight people and our questions and conversations ranged greatly. What is our collective conscious on the practices and principles of collaboration? What is our motivation for engaging in collaborative work, does it benefit our practice? Do our ideas become better, or do they get watered down? What and how do we share when we are collaborating? What issues of scale and scope affect how and what we collaborate on?

Author and MIT Professor, Sherry Turkle writes, “A successful analysis disturbs the field in the interests of long-term gain; it learns to repair along the way. One moves forward in a chastened, self-reflective spirit. Acknowledging limits, stopping to make the corrections, doubling back.” (p 284) Technology is often described as an mediator, shaping our experiences, thoughts and acting as a moment of connection or interaction between two or more disparate elements. That powerful relationship with technology is constantly altered. With each evolution we go through a process of exploring, testing and deciding on how we use these new tools. It is precisely this rapid change that provoked us to explore the potential of these new liminal spaces. And, specifically, the potential to enhance our collaborative capacity, find new ways to work together, find inspiration, and re-engage with ourselves and others.
–Brooke Chornyak, Co-Editor

Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. New York: Basic, 2011. Print.

introduction



Saying that collaborative processes enhance creative and critical potential is not a new idea, and might even be at the point of being mundane. In both education and practice, we understand that our brain and our cognitive function is enhanced by the experiences that we have, and our ability to link them to new knowledge. Steven Johnson, author of *Where Good Ideas Come From* puts it more directly when he argues that new ideas are “works of bricolage...We take the ideas we’ve inherited or that we’ve stumbled across, and we jigger them together into some new shape” (page needed) The need to see wide perspectives and set up situations that provide the insight necessary for adaptive, divergent and critical thinking are core to design process. This knowledge transfer is quite obviously provoked through the connectivity between different people. Libraries are being designed not for the gaining of knowledge from books to people, but from people to people. Global companies intentionally design their spaces to encourage new connections not through mainline channels, but through chance encounters between people that wouldn’t necessarily interact on their own. And more and more, collaboration is seen as principal to innovation. Possibly because of the mystery of the collaborative process or because of its seemingly untamed and organic nature—a collaborative company is often equated with an innovative company. One only needs to search through the most well-known design firm, or universities marketing materials to see the pervasive nature of collaboration in the creative process. In other words, one cannot claim to be innovative, without claiming to also be collaborative.

This link between collaboration and innovation has set up a race to engage in what may or may not be truly collaborative processes. Add the capacity to connect through a growing number of technological platforms and environments and the ease with which we can work together grows exponentially larger. The need to define collaboration, and to try to understand how collaboration exists similarly or distinctly within the physical and virtual worlds is an important consideration. If the technology allows us to connect more easily, than the impetus to connect without necessarily collaborating

grows. A recent Samsung commercial promotes its notebook as facilitating collaboration, yet shows a businessman engaging in task management and oversight—connection and working together, but not necessarily collaboration.

The critical definition and examination of collaboration—specifically within these new connected spaces—is at the core of Volume 2 of *Margin*. As an experimental journal, this volume aligns with the first in that we continued to use it as a venue to test out new ways to experiment with the collaborative process in design. It diverged from the first volume in that we introduced the online environment as a mediating space. With this introduction, it soon became clear that the way that we collaborate in these spaces was, and had to be, very different than face to face. It also became clear that these mediating environments quite easily facilitated connectivity, but without a fundamental definition of collaboration, it was difficult to evaluate the collaborative work being explored within them.

The Experience and Conditions for Collaboration

Does a group of people brainstorming constitute collaboration? Or, does collaboration by its very nature involve a more prolonged interaction? How essential is personal connectivity, trust and authorship to a collaborative process? At what project scale does collaboration cease to exist? How do reactive and interactive processes affect collaboration? These are some of the questions that we addressed in our conversations and now include in this second volume of *Margin*. Without a clear definition of collaboration, or how it might benefit innovative processes, the true power of collaboration gets diluted and misused before its fullest potential has been explored. As Sharon Poggenpohl argues in *Practicing Collaboration in Design*, “One can contribute to a project without collaborating. In a contribution, one’s role is narrowly defined—it may happen in a specific sequence and in a special way. It may be a particular skill one brings to a project. A contributor may also be part of a marginal group who offers aid or support but does no direct work on and is not essential to the project.” (p.#) In other words, collaboration is not about the number of people at the table, it’s about how those people work together. And as Jonathan Russell explores in his article on “Collaboration and Scale,” the size of the collaborative team is not as critical as how they are working together. It is only through prolonged contact, and equal buy-in and trust that collaboration (and we might say innovation) are conditioned to happen. In defining collaboration, Russell also looks more closely at two areas of collaboration that are irrespective of size and scale of project and team—engagement as passive or active, and interaction as reactive or interactive.

By applying these definitions or criteria to various projects, we start to make distinctions between crowd-sourcing, co-creation and collaboration.

Technology and Collaboration

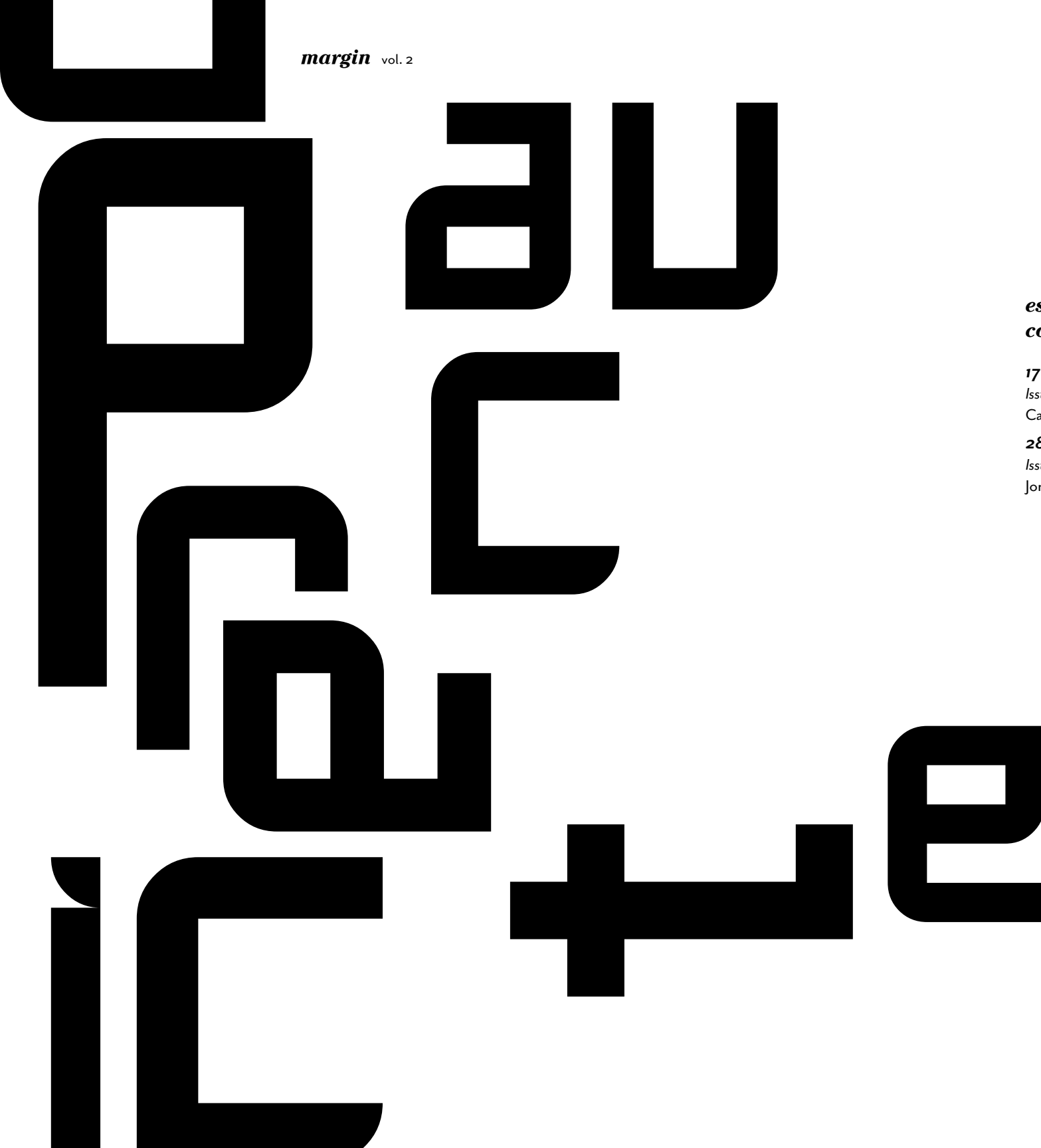
Equally as important in considering collaboration in our new technologically mediated world is the potential for these environments to facilitate or hamper collaboration. This again is where the definitions of collaboration become critical for evaluating the affordances of environments for design collaboration. As Tegtmeier and Normoyle outline in their essay on “Technology and Collaboration,” the spectrum of environments claiming to facilitate collaboration has grown exponentially over the past 5 years. But often, that claim is directed mostly at the tasks that one can accomplish through their use. Shared calendars, email and note taking, even face to face meetings do not, in and of themselves, equate to collaboration. It is through the affordances that these tools hold FOR collaboration—building trust through face to face contact, for instance, that are the true forces for collaboration. If we are truly interested in building these spaces to collaborate, we must move beyond the tasks that we can accomplish and think about the experience that they can encourage.

As Tegtmeier and Normoyle also argue, possibly one of the most powerful aspects of new technological means for collaboration is the access that it provides for potential collaborations at all scales. The video conferencing that was once accessible only by purchase—and thereby the province of the corporate world—is now open and free to the public, encouraging collaboration at all levels. Equally as compelling is the use of technology as connecting collaborators to new ideas. The use of the “wormhole” not as a wasteful endeavor, but as an agendaless environment of discovery and connectivity is an exciting embrace of the power of technology to draw us in and introduce us to new ideas in a way that only a boundless window can.

Authorship and Collaboration

Possibly at the core of collaboration is the issue of authorship. No matter how large (or small) the project, how active or interactive it is, the perception of authorship is one of the trickier parts of any collaborative process.
—Tania Allen, Co-Editor

Johnson, Steven. *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*. New York: Riverhead, 2010. Print.



***essays on
collaboration***

17

Issues of Technology

Cat Normoyle, Rebecca Tegtmeier

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Issues of Scale

Jonathan Russell

This paradox of engagement vs. disengagement is really fascinating to me. I envision this conundrum like a scale where we attempt to keep both sides balanced.

I wonder though if this idea might be off subject for Margin or perhaps better off elaborated upon later in the paper... It's a topic of another paper I'm working on and it feels applicable here but I could use some feedback.

Reply • Resolve

Cat Normoyle 3:17 PM Nov 17 • Re-open ✓
 Selected text:
Technology is connectivity. The conundrum that I find this conundrum so fascinating. What can connect us in one place often requires a disconnection in another place. This paradox feels unresolvable and perhaps instead behaves more like a spectrum where you continuously move back and forth trying to keep balance.

This section may serve better further along in the paper... what do you think?
 received on my FB status.

Cat Normoyle 2:06 PM Nov 22
 The more I think about this statement, the more I think it could fall under content management (CM) that I write about below as something that aids collaboration. It allows collaborators to share information. How can we make sure we clearly differentiate the two?

Rebecca Tegtmeier 9:21 AM Nov 21

issues of technology

Collaboration is a process of working, centered around the act of communication. This act of communication is complete with disagreements, negotiations, and agreements. The goal of collaboration is to share and expand on ideas, drawing from multiple areas of expertise and opinions. Technology has become a vital tool in this process of collaboration. It creates the means through which communication can take place and facilitates a forum for sharing and collecting the ideas, often acting as a mediator between people, places, and information.

In order to better understand how technology is used for collaboration it can be helpful to uncover what kinds of technology inhibit a “false sense” of collaboration. Technology systems that maintain, organize, or implement a workflow across people and projects offer a different set of affordances than those we look to discuss in this essay. These systems offer project management for teams to consider roles and tasks between a project team. They often track hours of team members and administer tasks and milestones for a project. Collaboration should not be confused with “teamwork.” Teamwork offers an “assembly-line” of tasks directed to certain people at certain times to reach project completion. These systems often are confused for being ones that facilitate collaboration, when in fact these are not the systems we wish to discuss through this essay.

There is a spectrum of technology systems currently available, each offering a different way of working through tasks or managing collaboration. On one end of the spectrum there are tools similar to Basecamp, an online project management tool that organizes and tracks projects. Project tasks can be assigned to team members and milestones can be set to ensure that deadlines are met. It enables communication but it does not encourage collaboration. Google Drive, on the other end of the spectrum, is a more organic system that enables collaboration and communication to take place at the same time. It does not dictate a “work-flow” for users to follow, but offers an environment that is malleable for each situation. It becomes



Fig 1. Video Conferencing Timeline

transparent in the process of collaboration, which perhaps might be the defining characteristic of successful technology tools for collaboration.

This essay will discuss the effects of technological tools in the context of collaborative work. We will discuss the benefits of using technology in collaboration and examine collaborative environments that provide seamless work platforms, eliminating constraints like physical locations, sharing information and time. We will also look at examples where technology interferes with collaboration. Issues like authorship, privacy, reliability, and unpredictability often arise. This essay will also serve as a case study, sharing the experiences and insights of working collaboratively to write this essay.

Technology enables communication and connectivity to take place through various platforms, expanding the notion of what it means to engage in collaboration. Whether formal or informal, open or private, communication and the sharing of ideas can take place through textual discussion, image and file sharing, audio exchanges, and video discussion. Advances in technology have allowed for this collaboration to happen at different levels under various circumstances.

Video conferencing mimics the traditional collaborative method of face-to-face meetings. It can be used effectively when multiple parties agree upon a meeting time in a virtual platform like Skype, Google Hangout and Facetime. Originally a tool that was thought of as impractical and expensive, advancements in compression and bandwidth made it useful for corporations and the military. Video conferencing is now open to less formal means of communication and is used in personal one-to-one exchanges. Google hangouts is an attainable way to quickly meet with 10 people at the same time; no longer is a video conference just meant for corporations to conduct global business. The informality of tech-driven communication has made collaboration accessible to all types of people and organizations. What was once only available for global business communication, large

enterprises, and organized institutions is now available to anyone with access to an internet connection, large or small, and for all purposes.

The use of video in a collaborative initiative brings people together much like bringing people together in a physical environment. We are able to hear and see the expressions of those we are working with. The main benefit to the use of this technology is that it brings together people from different locations, no longer are we required to be in the same place at the exact same time.

Time is greatly affected by the use of technology as well. By eliminating the need to travel to a physical location in order to meet (whether it be traveling across the country or walking down a hallway) technology becomes the most efficient way to save time. Meeting online also encourages everyone to stay on the task at hand as it often eliminates the time or place to introduce unrelated topics. The online environment becomes another space when these meetings take place, which is often respected by all collaborative members.

Instant connectivity to others eliminates time obstacles. For example, if you are unsure how to go about a project, within seconds, you can create an online community where people can share possible solutions and better yet, personal experiences detailing the pros and cons for the question at hand. This levels the playing field allowing for participation from people with differing expertise and world-views.

Chat messaging applications are also useful means of time-savings as it can instantly connect you to those you need to collaborate with, whether formal or informal. Google hangouts enables a chat messaging feature to be used during a hangout/video session. This allows for the sharing of text or images which are relevant to the conversation taking place.

This notion of “sharing” is the primary aspect of collaboration and is most supported by technology. Sharing can take place in many forms, visually

and textually. The online environment is about sharing thoughts, ideas, and inspiration and continues to build platforms to promote sharing. Social media sites are driven by the idea of sharing information but not specifically for the means of collaboration. Google Drive and other applications built with collaboration in mind allows for sharing documents with the intent for others to edit and expand on the ideas presented. Google also enables “screen-sharing” which opens up an opportunity to create in real-time.

Sharing Ideas

Technology aids collaboration when it is used with certain intentions and expectations in mind. Technology, when executed transparently within a project framework, can effectively connect people across locations and open accessibility of information to large or small networks, allowing people to share information and experiences instantaneously. Some companies have implemented live-streaming “worm holes” where collaboration can occur throughout the workday, actively engaging (or ignoring) each other’s virtual presence. It provides a similar informal, spontaneous and unplanned collaboration that instant messaging provides but implements live streaming technology.

The wormhole allows people to collaborate seamlessly and uninterrupted throughout the workday. The connection between offices supports casual

collaboration, much in the way one might prompt unsolicited collaboration with a colleague in your office.¹ Institutions like MIT & Stanford and companies like Cisco & Accenture implement wormholes in both formal and casual settings. Scale can significantly impact the reality of this virtual collaboration.

Online Communities can also aid in collaborative projects. Online Communities (OC) are structured, virtual communities that are built to connect people with information around a particular topic of interest. Online communities are often open networks, meaning that all people who are interested in the topic can participate. Wikipedia is an example of a successful open network, online community that sustains itself on participation of users to add and edit the collection of knowledge. In the strictest sense of the definition, Wikipedia is more of a participatory space; that is, it functions as an open collaboration where any user can engage but only within a structured framework. This format, however open, does not lend itself to communication and discussion but instead, is limited to only a final result. But the fact that it is completely self-governed and managed is a strong indicator of the collective responsibility and ownership that is critical to collaboration in general. Wikipedia thrives because participants are able to claim authorship of publications and knowledge as well as serve as editors of each other’s entries. This serves as a natural form of checks and balances for the online community.

Threadless.com is another successful example of an online community whose methods can be looked to in modelling online collaborative work. As an online t-shirt company, Threadless.com challenges an open network of collaborators to submit designs for possible production and sale worldwide from the website. This example functions differently than Wikipedia as there is a top-down governance system in place. The website reads, “Our never-ending, no-themes, no-holds-barred, open-ended design challenge; 302,296 designs submitted - 5,607 designs printed.”² Although the company invites all to submit designs, there are people that control what is published and what is not. This strategy adds a level of competition among its participants that dictates the standard of quality of the final product. It allows the facilitator to control the final solution.



Fig 2. IDEO / Steelcase Wormhole



Fig 3. MIT / Stanford Wormhole

Sharing Workspace

Another way technology can aid collaboration is through the use of content management systems like Google Drive. Content management, not to be confused with project management, is a way to share, add, and edit a piece of work content. It allows people to manage and keep track of revisions or changes and invite people to add, edit, delete information as needed.

Using content management systems like Google Drive can raise issues of privacy and trust, depending on the nature of the project and its participants because it is cloud hosted, meaning it lives on a shared server space provided by a service like Google or Dropbox. Google Drive is free for participants and falls under shared cloud-hosted content management. If issues of privacy are more of a concern, then a company may choose private on-premise hosting. Nasa, Fox, Office Depot, Michelin are some companies that pay for on-premise hosted content management to provide the privacy they need to add, edit and share live documentation internally and with collaborative partners. The decision to work with a cloud-hosted service versus an on-premise hosted service is dependent upon the sensitivity of the content created and agreement among participants.

Using tech-based collaborative tools can always raise issues of reliability and predictability. Often teams can become so reliant on our tech tools that we do not know how to work without it. How often have you worked on a project and have had to reboot your modem because the internet cut out? If you have used technology before, then you know it can often shut down. Whether it is a power outage in the facility you are working out of or the service provided can not withstand the capacity of users on their platforms, it is possible you can lose time and money working across virtual platforms during down time.

Sharing Control

Authorship and Ownership of information can be an issue in collaboration. Take the example Wikipedia again. Authorship is given up when a participant chooses to publish and share the information on the website. However, the phenomenon that happens from this participation is that a new sense of ownership develops from the online community itself as the participant has become part of something bigger than an individual. Issues of authorship and ownership will always be a “problem” in collaborative projects but there seems to be a strong take-away that each contributor can gain from participation. The phenomenon being, if one feels strongly about the collective project, he or she may give up some of that authorship to contribute to the greater good. Our attention is immediately challenged to stay focused on the task at hand, when we engage in collaboration through an online environment. Whether we are participating in a Google Hangout or a text chat, we are most likely engaging in multiple online environments at the same time as well as our physical environment. Who hasn’t checked their email or browsed their Facebook newsfeed while they are in a google hangout or an online chat? We are all guilty. This might be the biggest downfall to using technology in collaboration. Collaborating in the physical environment makes one more accountable for their attention and actions.

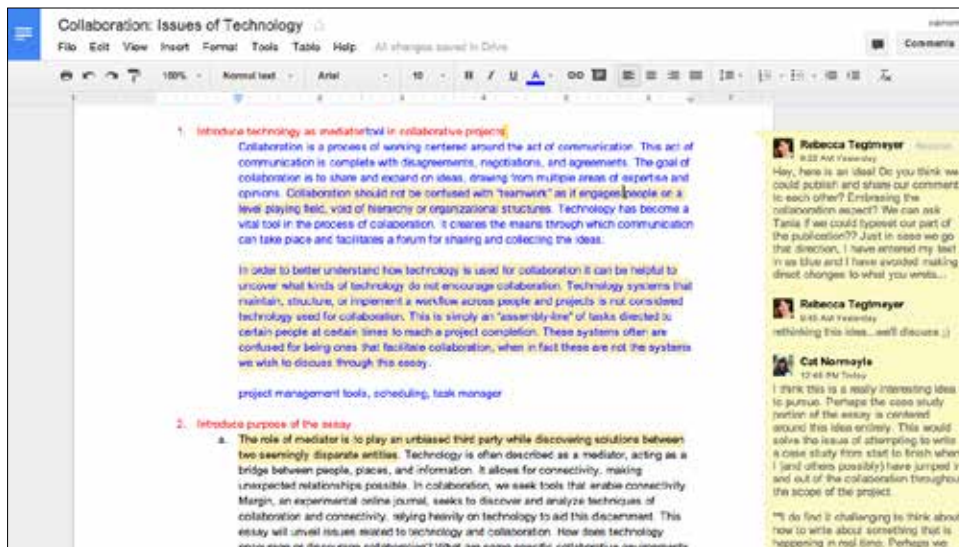
Most often, issues regarding tech-based collaboration occur situationally when the methodology of collaboration either doesn’t meet the need or breaks down in the process of collaboration. In an effort to avoid tech tools hindering the collaborative process, it is very important to think about the goals of a group project and strategize the most suitable way to implement technology based tools for collaboration. For example, scale plays a big role in determining a successful tech tool for collaboration. An online community might be the best solution if you are gathering or sharing information among many participants versus a smaller network of participants that might function well with Video Conferencing. Should the collaboration be casual or should it be structured? Does governance need to be dictated or can it be an open forum of solutions?

Margin Collaboration: Case Study

Pisano and Verganti offer two basic issues that must be considered when deciding how to collaborate, open vs. closed networks and flat vs. hierarchical governance.³ Open and closed networks consider how many participants will work in a collaboration and whether these participants are chosen dependent on expertise or not. Flat and hierarchical governance determine who defines the problem and chooses the solution.

This journal and collaborative project, *Margin*, operates as a closed network and employs a flat governance. All participants work to define the problem and choose multiple solutions. Two individuals originated the concept and set up a framework to invite and include other participants. In the larger group context they act as facilitators, editors, and curators. Participants are chosen based on their interest in the topic of collaboration and can contribute as much or as little as they wish. Participants can enter and leave the process fluidly.

Margin's collaborative environment is supported by various methods of technology such as Google Hangout and Google Drive. Use of these technological tools allows for the participants to come from various locations and areas of expertise, this widens the scope of knowledge and adds diversified solutions as possible outcomes.



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Cat Normoyle

1:44 PM Today

Collaboration is not teamwork clarification but I disagree with second statement - It can be that there are collaborations on governance / hierarchy. this needs to be restated.



Rebecca Tegtmeyer

9:52 AM Today

This is inspired by the comment received on my FB status.

Reply to this comment...



Rebecca Tegtmeyer

9:20 AM Yesterday

I'm a bit hesitant to refer to "mediator" as it implies disa which IS a part of collab, but entirely. What about referring as a "tool"?

The collaborative group engages in many activities sparked by group discussions that take place via google hangouts. These discussions are centered around “collaboration” and have become the general platform for problem finding and solving that is open for interpretation and experimentation. This essay is a product of multiple discussions that took the form of salons and experimental workshops. The salons were organized conversations that took place in Google Hangouts with no more than 10 people at a time (due to Google Hangout’s limit). Through these salons various topics involving collaboration were covered and discussed. Arranged workshops put collaboration into action and resulted in tangible artifacts. One such workshop tested the limits of technology in the creation of a collaboration motion piece.

A series of essays are summarizing these experiences through a number of topics. This essay, “Collaboration: Issues of Technology” was written by Cat Normoyle (Memphis, TN) and Rebecca Tegtmeyer (Lansing, MI), both educators at academic institutions. This is our first experience working together outside of the larger group and we have never met in person. We chose to write in Google Drive through a Google Document, because it is a working space familiar to both of us. The use of comments, highlighting, and editing marks enabled us to have a dialog about our thoughts and perspectives.

The comments worked as mini-conversations about an idea that was expressed in the main body of our text. We met via Google Hangouts often to review the changes and discuss next steps for writing.

The main obstacle we faced working this way was time. Because we are on different schedules in different time zones, it takes a greater effort to coordinate a common time for us to meet and work together. We would often work individually, but the main decisions could only happen when we would have a discussion about it. This leads us to question how the experience would have been different had we shared a similar location and time zone and be able to meet “face-to-face”.

Some of the problems that face technologically-driven collaborations is the human-centered desire to work “face-to-face” in support of spontaneous communication and organic workflows. Often those who work remotely, collaborating only through technological support feel disconnected from their peers and look for ways to connect in a more rich and meaningful way. People yearn for the casual collaborations that are encountered by running into each other during lunch break or stopping by someone’s office on a whim. These fluid or organic human interactions are sometimes lost in translation when we implement highly planned, organized collaboration methodologies like google hangout and skype meetings. On the contrary, these planned and organized collaborative interfaces like Google Hangout and Skype encourage collaboration in a very useful and appropriate way. Implementing these strategies requires pre-planning in the same way physical meetings require meeting requests to organize.

(1) Carr, David F. “What a Video Wormhole Can Do For You.” Information Week 24 Oct 2011. Web. 5 Nov 2013.

(2) <http://www.threadless.com/>

(3) Gary P. Pisano and Roberto Verganti. “Which Kind of Collaboration Is Right for You.” Harvard Business Review. Dec 2008. Web. 5 Nov 2013

issues of scale

Definition of collaboration

The New Oxford American Dictionary defines collaboration as the action of working with someone to produce or create something. Yet true collaboration is more than simply working with *someone* to create *something*. It is two or more individuals working towards a common goal, equally sharing ideas in open communication. It is an interactive process, one done together in real time, rather than alone in isolation.

Criteria for collaboration

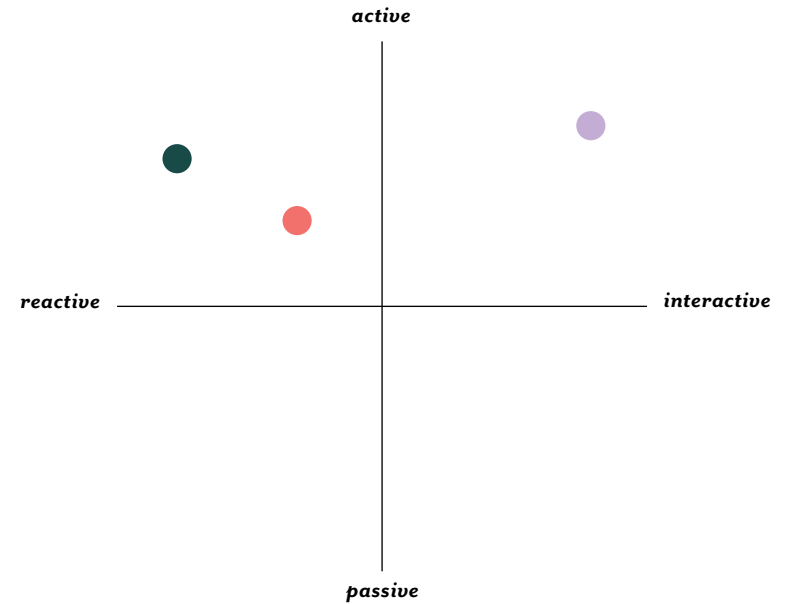
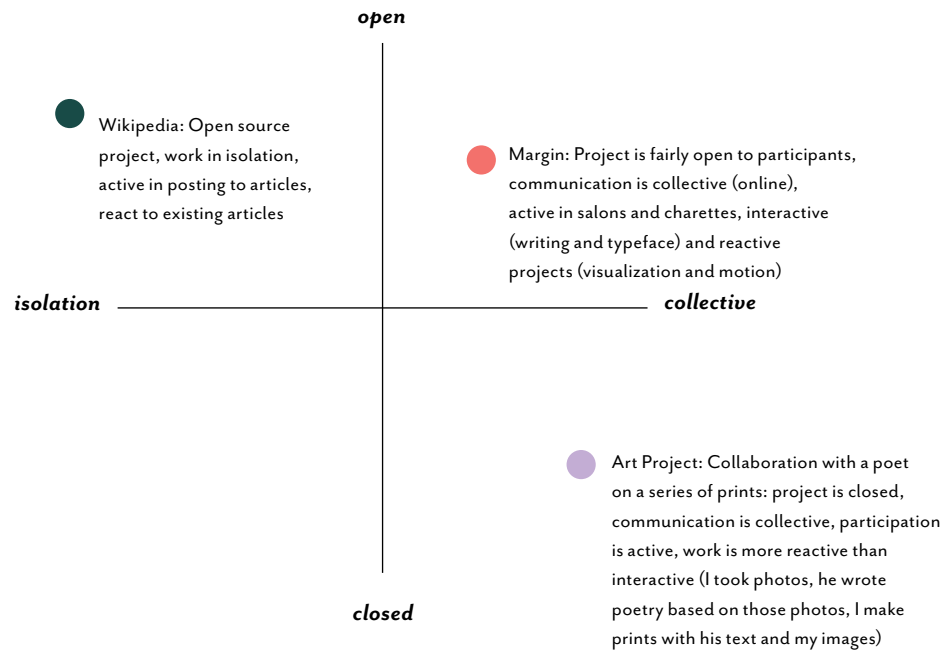
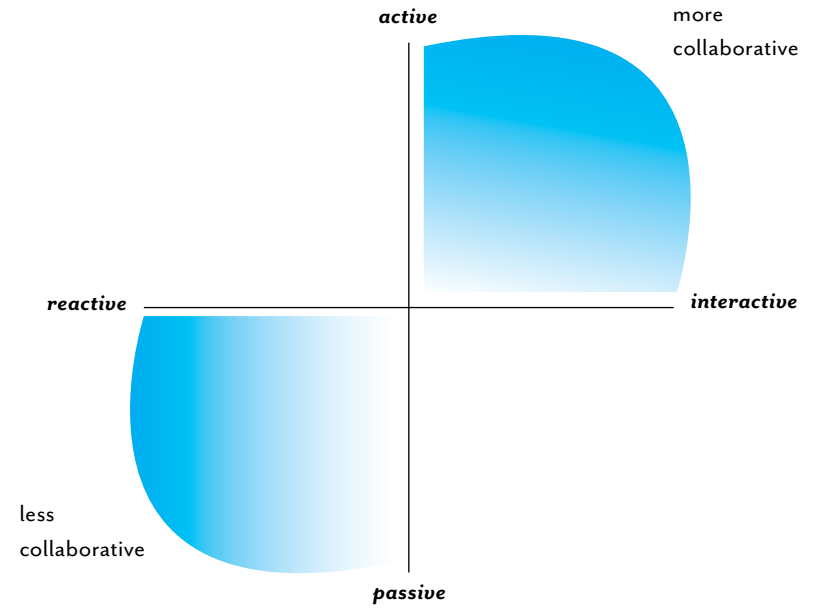
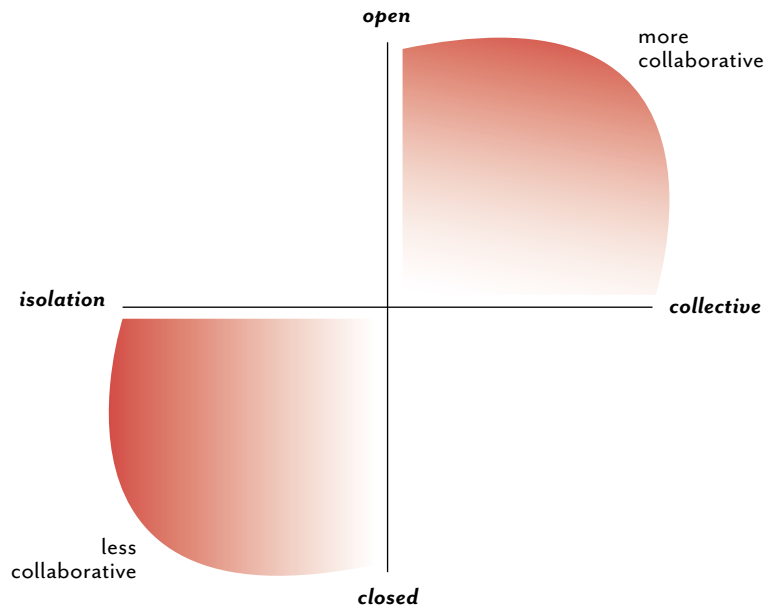
There have been various studies done to measure the level of collaboration among different organizations. These studies suggest models of collaboration that range from coexistence (no collaboration) to collaboration (unified efforts). A five step model of collaboration used in a study measuring collaboration among grant partners (Frey, Lohmeier, Lee, and Tollefson, 383) suggests the following levels, from the least amount of collaboration to the most: Networking, Cooperation, Coordination, Coalition, and Collaboration. The aspect of this model that is the most helpful are what the authors refer to as “relationship characteristics.” These characteristics range from “loosely defined roles with little communication” at the networking level to “members belong to one system with frequent communication characterized by mutual trust” at the collaboration level. Even though these studies relate to the collaboration between organizations rather than individuals, these models are interesting and could be applied to thinking about collaboration in design projects. Using an approach similar to the various levels of design, there are two areas that could help to determine the level of collaboration in a project: Engagement (passive/active), and Interaction (reactive/interactive).

Engagement, in the context of a collaborative design project, refers to how involved an individual is with the project, or their relationship with the project. Are they active in organizing and implementing the project (active) or simply experiencing the effects or results of the project (passive)? Is the individual creating (active) or consuming (passive)?

Interaction, in the context of a design project, refers to an individual's role in the production of the work. Are the team members working together in real time on the same work (interactive) or are they working in isolation and then handing off to another team member (reactive)? Mapping these two areas will help to define the level of participation in a project.

Scale of the project / Size of the team

The scale of the project itself does not impact the level of collaboration that is possible. There can be as much, or as little, collaboration in an enormous community based project as there is in a small art or design project. Collaboration is about the size of the team, or teams, working on the project and how they interact with each other. If a project is of a certain scale, those working on the project should be broken down into smaller groups with specific tasks. It is important that these smaller groups communicate effectively with the other groups. The size of the “teams” collaborating does make a difference. Once teams/groups reach a certain size the ability of the members to collaborate effectively is affected, and individuals transition from collaborators to participants. With that being said, the size of the teams is not quite as important as the way the teams interact. The outcome of the project can be quite different based on the ways the teams interact, their process, and the level of collaboration (communication, critique, idea sharing, etc.) they engage in. The same project with the same size teams, the same resources, and the same goals will generate different results depending on the level of collaboration and the team members attitudes towards collaboration. Team members need to have buy-in to the collaborative process, and feel secure safe with the team members they are collaborating with. Issues of trust, ownership/authorship, credit, payment (or other financial concerns where professional or for-profit projects are concerned) have to be addressed in order to open up the collaborative process and really get ideas moving. There may not be an “optimal” range of individuals working on a project, but experience has shown that in some instances 12 people can work quite effectively together in a highly collaborative way, and other times 2 people is



too many. A suggested safe range for a solid collaborative experience would be anywhere from 2–12 people. Any more than 12 and the exchange of ideas and communication slow down. As far as the scale of the project, there is no limit. But, as mentioned above, the individuals working on the project need to be divided into smaller collaborative groups working on specific aspects of the project. The smaller groups then collaborate on the project as a whole.

Being a collaborator vs. being a participant

Depending on the level of engagement and interaction one has with a project you could determine the level of collaboration, and whether or not an individual is a collaborator on a project or a participant in a project. For example, if you were to plot the engagement and interaction of an individual working on a project on a graph, higher levels of engagement and interaction would denote a more collaborative project and those involved with the project would be considered collaborators. Lower levels of engagement and interaction would denote a less collaborative project and those involved would be considered participants.

This graph can be layered with another measuring Openness (open/closed) and Communication (collective/isolation). This would address issues with open source projects and how collaborative they are. Individuals that originate and/or administer a project would be considered collaborators (actively engaged, close communication), and people that contribute to the project with various ideas or perform specific tasks would be considered participants. Wikipedia is a good example of this. The project is very open, a majority of contributors work in isolation. Some users are very active, but their engagement is mainly reactive. Not a very collaborative project. Outside of those administering the site, a majority of users would be considered participants.

The attached graphs illustrates this idea. In order to demonstrate a range of project types that are often referred to as collaborative, Wikipedia, the authors involvement with the Margin Journal, and a personal artistic collaboration have been illustrated. It can be seen how the graphs might be used to identify an individual's role in a project, and determine how collaborative a project might be. It could also be used to identify the key collaborators on a project.

A system like this could also be used to determine if the scale of the project, in numbers of individuals involved, is more or less effective. This would not necessarily yield a system that would provide a formula for an optimal number of individuals to have in a collaborative project because each project is different. However, it would be helpful in finding out who is collaborating and who is participating, and thus give you an idea of the number of people to include on a project or team for optimal collaboration. This process could be used when determining the level of collaboration for projects at any scale, be it a team of 2 people working on an art project or an entire community working on something like a public gardening space.

Conclusion

When it comes to collaboration, scale matters. When dealing with the scale of the project, big or small, the important aspect is the size of the teams, not the total number of individuals working on the project, or the scale of the desired outcomes. When it comes to teams, it is important the teams be an appropriate size. Consider the personalities of those involved, their level of trust and comfort with each other, and how they communicate when assembling the teams. These elements will help determine the optimal number of individuals working together, and create teams of collaborators rather than groups of participants. At the end of the day everyone involved should feel like a true collaborator on the project. When they look at the outcomes of the work, they should feel that they had a hand in the creation, production, and execution of the work.

Frey, Bruce B, Jill H. Lohmeier, Stephen W. Lee, and Nona Tollefson. "Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners." American Journal of Evaluation. 27.3 (2006): 383-392. Print.

case studies

35

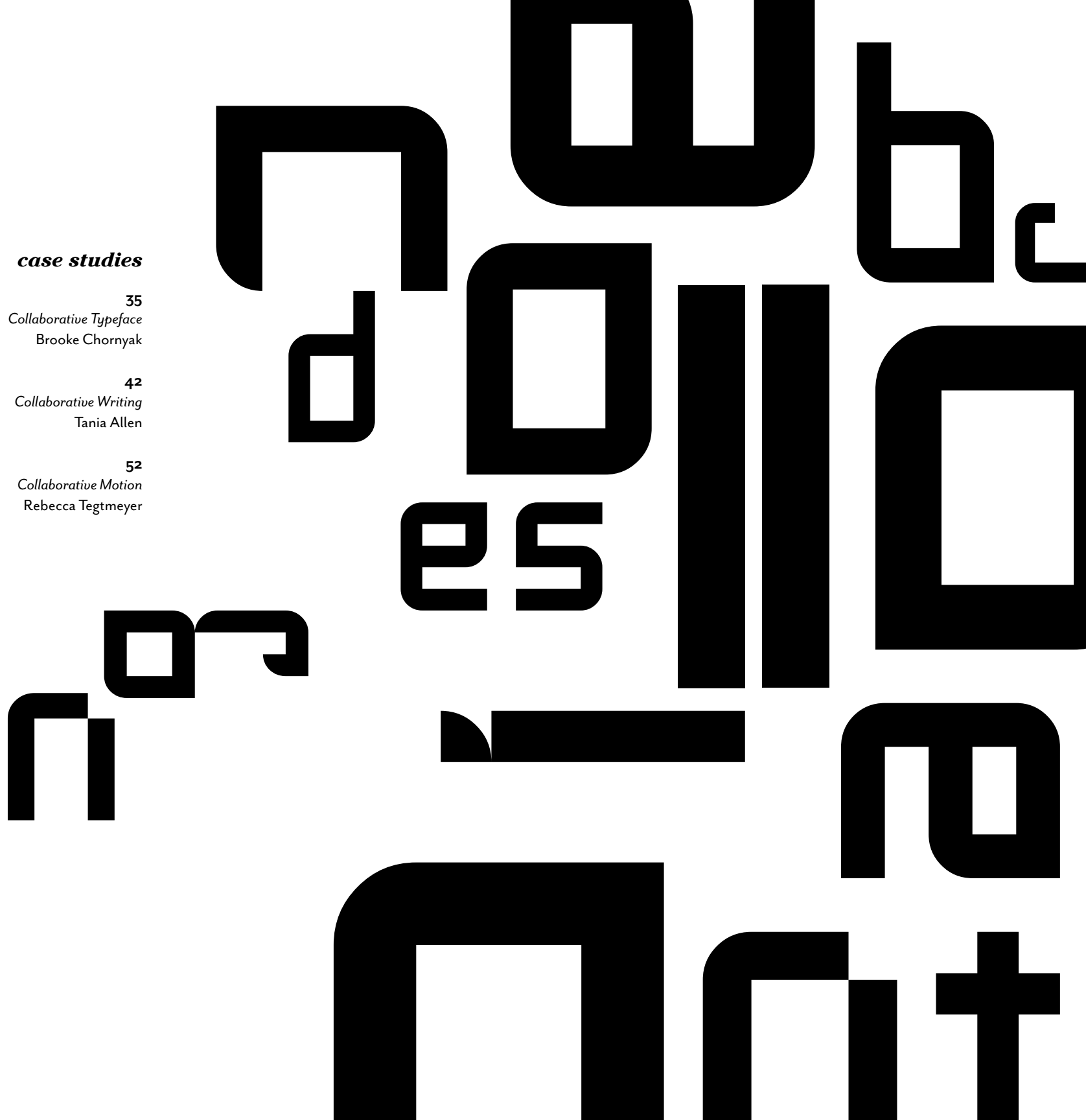
Collaborative Typeface
Brooke Chornyak

42

Collaborative Writing
Tania Allen

52

Collaborative Motion
Rebecca Tegtmeier



Charette 1: Typographic Tools Workshop

In second issue of Margin the editors established a series of workshops that intended to explore and experiment with the notions of collaboration with other designers. We used Google Hangout to gather and engage in the two hour workshop, ultimately creating a single typeface together. Previous to the gathering, several acrylic stencils made up of abstracted geometries were mailed to the participants so that when the group gathered to work they had a initial structure to guide them. This case study examines the notions of structural guides for collaboration and provides a detailed account on how we navigated working collectively, as well as independently as the chat was in progress and then plan how to share, critique and finalize work.

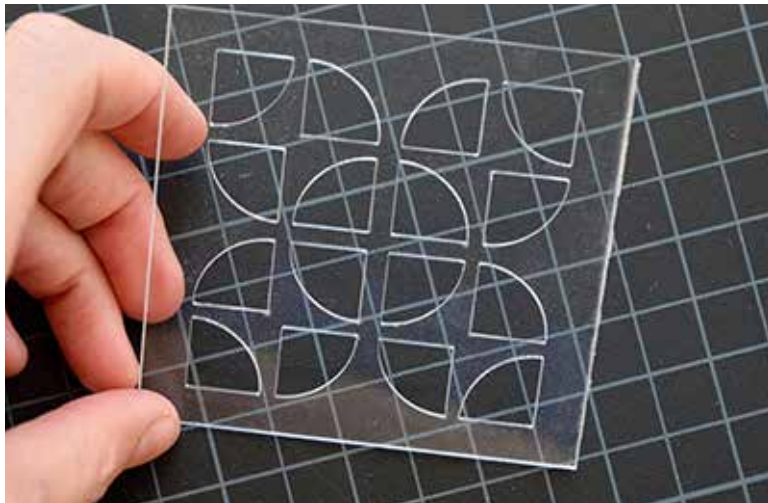


fig 1. acrylic type tool

Engaging others in a participatory design process entails creating works that provide affordances for authorship, creative structure and an invitation to collaborate. Umberto Eco describes this invitational approach in the visual arts, music, and literature in his 1962 book *The Open Work*. (1) Eco

describes his notion of “openness” as having defined constraints and latent characteristics that guarantee the work will be understood as a whole rather than an agglomeration of random components. Though in flux, the work has a structural vitality and is characterized by an invitation to make the piece in collaboration with the author. Eco classified three types of open work. In “a kit of parts,” artifacts are left unfinished, as an original author passes them on to another maker in the form of loose construction kits. “Works in movement” are “artistic productions which display an intrinsic mobility, and have a kaleidoscopic capacity to suggest themselves in constantly renewed aspects to the viewer.” Finally, “the indefinite” are works that, according to Eco, “use symbols as a communicative channel for the indeterminate, open to constantly shifting responses and interpretive stances.”

Participatory projects often flounder because they lack an appropriate structure suited to the creative skill level of participants. Creative activity occurs at different degrees depending on your knowledge and experience of the domain in which you are working. To this end, Liz Sanders, the founder of Make Tools, a company that explores co-design methods, has identified four levels of creativity that people seek. Each level follows a developmental path from doing to adapting to making and finally to creating. To this end, Sanders’s levels can be used as a structural gauge to understand the creative abilities and needs of individuals engaging in co-design processes.

LEVEL	TYPE	MOTIVATED BY	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
1	doing	productivity	getting something done	organizing my herbs and spices
2	adapting	appropriation	make things my own	embellishing a ready made meal
3	making	asserting ability or skill	making with hands	cooking with a recipe
4	creating	inspiration	express creativity	dreaming up a new dish

fig 2. sanders, elizabeth b., “scaffolds for building everyday creativity”, 2006

In a previous experimentation at Design Inquiry, a weeklong gathering of designers and artists, the gathering experimented with the Plaque Découpée Universelle, (2) a highly ridged stencil used to make the entire alphabet. In its complexity, the stencil appeared to be a fixed system, a somewhat limited tool without the flexibility to produce anything but what was prescribed by the creator. In working with the stencil the DI participants came to reveal that, in fact, the stencil invited misuse rather than correct use in order to generate sense

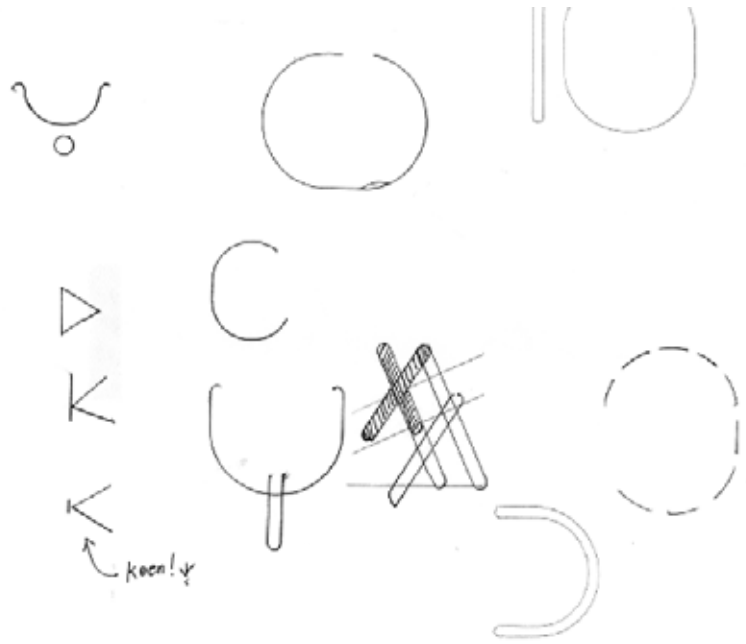


fig 3. workshop sketches

of authorship in the end results. Nonetheless, it became evident that ambiguity in an open work is key: it provides the latitude necessary for self-invention and authorship at least for those with significant experience in creative domains.

It is important to note, that the first Margin workshop, was comprised of designers, using Liz Sanders levels of creativity as a design guide for the type tools. To explore this theory of structural ambiguity, participants were mailed three acrylic stencils. The tools were designed to allow maximum creativity from these creative practitioners. Ultimately, the tool's abstracted structure forced negotiation amongst the group about use and formal consistencies because the tool's ultimate use is open to interpretation.

Upon meeting on Google chat, the group had an initial conversation, discussing each tool and the format of the workshop. Next, contributors spent thirty minutes using the tools, sketching several ideas, chatting and uploading those to the formatted Margin blog. It was evident that the use of constraints for the given tools expedited the generative process. Where

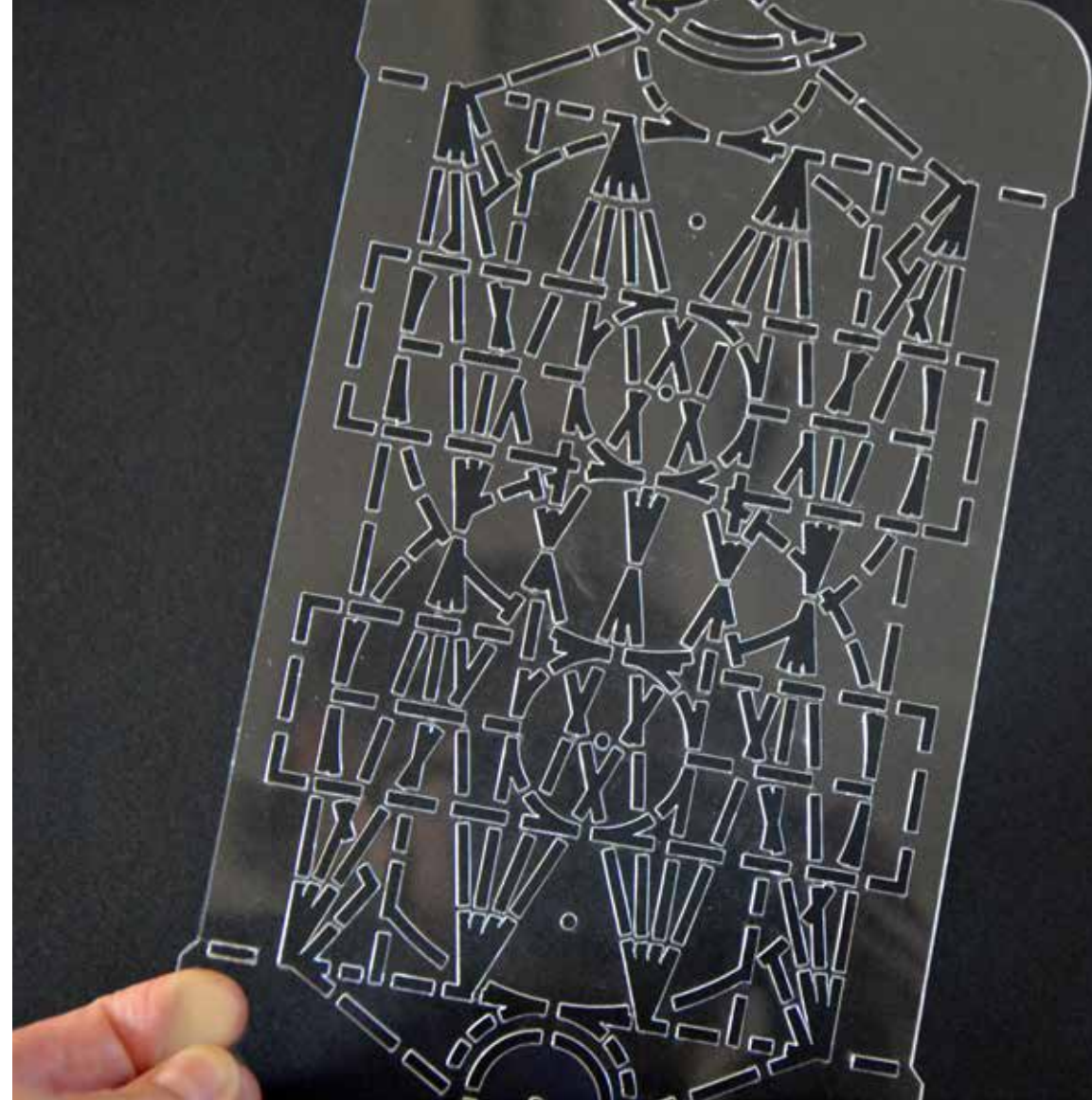


fig 4. plaque découpée universelle



fig 5 - 6. workshop and sketches



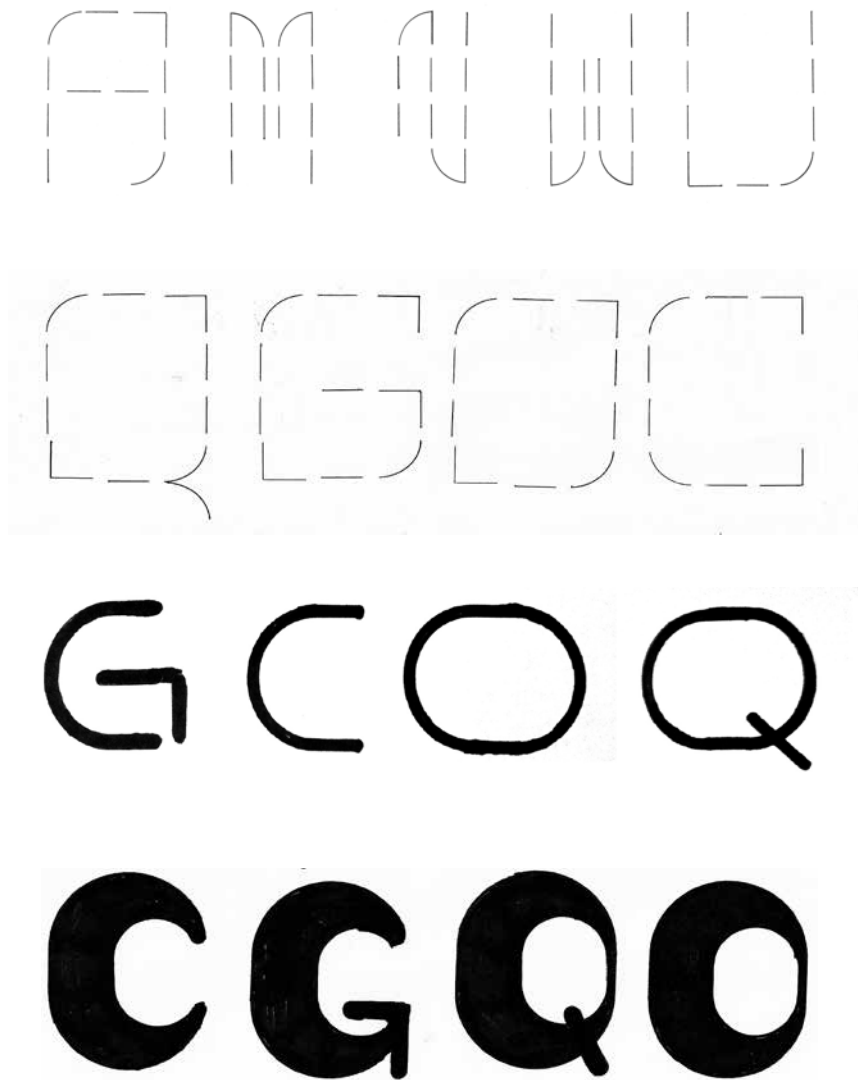


fig 6. participants sketches using acrylic tools

the process was slowed was in sharing visuals for discussion. Kelly Bailey, a participant from Ohio writes, “in using digital collaboration tools the methods are cumbersome to visualize work, either participants have to upload to a blog or website, email images to facilitate a group discussion about the visual work. Otherwise we can’t really see what each other is working on, especially if the designer is working analogue or off screen.” The process could be made more seamless and fluid so that technology can be invisible.

The group in 30 minutes generated several feasible directions however, after a group discussion one strategy was ultimately chosen. Each participant then chose a section of the alphabet and completed a physical sketch of the typeface with the tool. From these final sketches that were uploaded to the blog a final digital version of Midwest was made using *Fontstruct* and disseminated amongst the group.

Conclusion

These workshops were designed to question, how are systems for “collaboration” structured, how do you engage others in collaborative processes, what are the affordances and behaviors granted in current collaborative environments, such as Google Hangout? It is evident from the workshop that the constraint in the mailed acrylic tool help to generate a richer more directed outcomes at a faster pace. Without the tool, it can be supposed that much of the time would have been devoted to formal considerations and negotiations. The abstract structure of the tool allowed for multiple interpretations and authorship from participants. The clumsiness of the Google chat and the blog, however left much to be desired in this type of collaborative working environment. Nevertheless we enjoyed the connection, created a typeface and gained knowledge for the next workshop in the series.

(1) Eco, Umberto. *Open work*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1989. Print.

(2) Kindel, Eric. ‘*The “Plaque Découpée Universelle”: a geometric sanserif in 1870s Paris*’ *Typography Papers* 7 (September 2007): 71–80

Aa Bb Cc
Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo
Pp Qq Rr Ss
Tt Uu Vv Ww
Xx Yy Zz

Carved Symbols In
A Mountain Hollow
On The Bank of An
Inlet irritated An
Eccentric Person

charette2: a/synchronous: writing, visualization and collaboration

Constraints have long been a part of the design and writing process. Ernest Hemingway’s famous micro-novel, “*Baby Shoes. For Sale. Never Worn.*” was an exercise in story creating with only six-words. Stripping down the essence of any story into what is most elemental to communicate doesn’t debase the idea. Rather, that clarity is what builds meaning for the reader. In this way, writing is very much like designing—through the stripping away of the extraneous, we aim to create a more compelling experience for the reader or user. Where writing diverges from the design process is in how that meaning is created and experienced. During the design process, the focus is on foregrounding the meaning of the design, so end users are not trying to unpack its meaning in their interaction with the design object. Issues of usability focus directly on the intuitive nature of the design object and so the designer’s attempts are aligned with the need to provoke understanding at the front end of the interaction. Writing, on the other hand, develops a process whereby meaning unfolds over time. The true nature or understanding of the story is not fully experienced until the end, and even prolonged after the interaction with the narrative is over. That is where discussion and further rumination can add even more meaning to the narrative. As rhetorical acts both writing and designing include and exclude information to build meaning. Grace Lees-Maffei, editor of *Writing Design: Words and Objects* contends that “What is not written about is as revealing as what is. Omissions are eloquent: they form our norms as much as presence does, and they can imply disregard.”⁸

By setting up this essential dichotomy between these two acts, this charrette aimed, in part, to seek out how each process might inform the other. In other words, how would writing be influenced by the act of visualization, and vice versa? The collaborative activity added yet another layer to the experience for each individual designer. Addressing the topic of volume 02 of *Margin*, I devised this charette more specifically to see how participants might engage in writing as an additive and responsive act, to gauge how the process of visualization might add meaning and insight into the writing process and to see how virtual environments could be utilized to engage in both of these processes.

In contrast to the relatively structured nature of the first charette, the second charette aimed to open up the outcomes and work both inside and outside of the environment to create a series of visual essays. The generation of both content and image was designed to be an experiment in collaborative and reactive writing. The constraints embedded within this project were directed at the process itself, with the tools that each person used open to individual definition and choice.

The Structure

To begin the project, I prompted participants to engage in a responsive, circular writing project. As a method, the first participant was given an excerpt from an existing piece of writing—in this case, *The Merchant of Venice*—which they created a response to. Some participants translated line for line, others created a more original piece that responded to the ideas presented in the excerpt.

Participants were also asked to collect a series of images that connected to their written response in some way. These images were then used a collective bank for all participants to draw from.

Visualization, Part I

Through a series of iterative steps, participants visualized their written pieces, drawing on any elements contributed to the image and text bank. I encouraged them to modify their original text and combine image elements from various sources. They did this individually, but in real time while all connected to a Google Hangout. Throughout this part of the process,

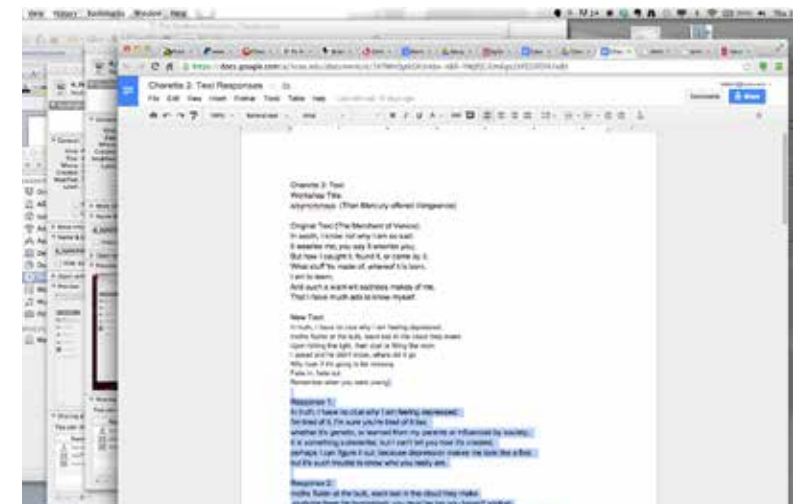
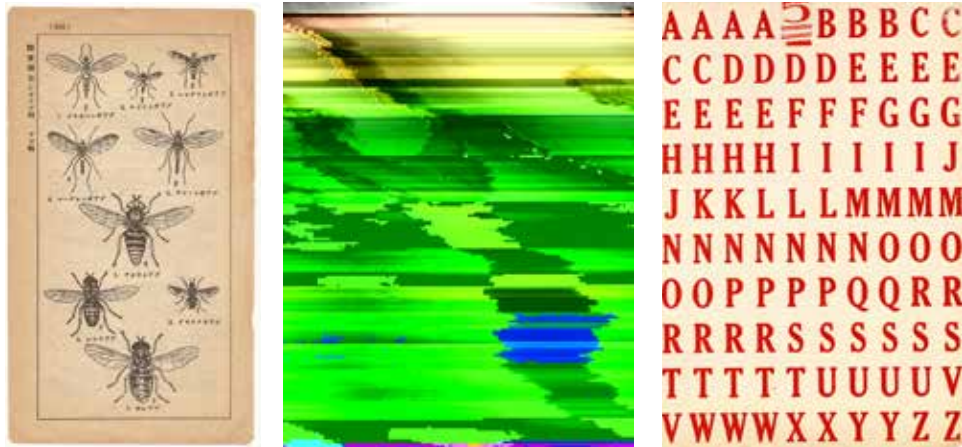


fig 1. a_synchronous_textresponse.png



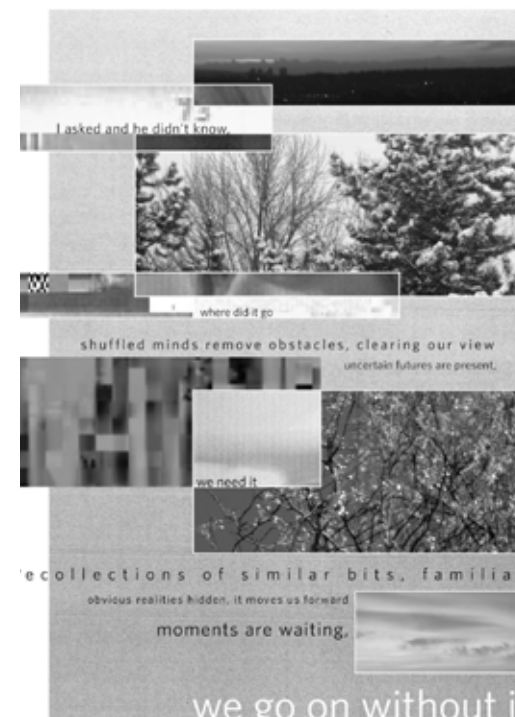
asynchronous_imagebank 01, 02, 03, etc.

participants discussed general ideas, but little instruction was given about how to interact. As a result, most work was done independently with intermittent sharing of work in progress through screen-sharing.

The final set of images from this round presented a wide range of responses, and were at various stages of completion. The conversation that developed as a result was focused on what elements from each essay was provocative and how the image and text worked in concert with one another (much like a traditional design critique might happen.) Mostly, the participants were interested in the ability to make in this online environment and to think through their ideas in a visual way.

Visualization, Part II

Originally, the second part of the visualization was meant to look critically at the visualizations that we had created and develop a single textual and visual response. But during the course of the original visualization and as a response to the discussion we engaged in after the first part took place, the group felt unsure and unable to create a single response. Possibly because each product was “complete” it seemed arbitrary to deconstruct and reconstruct another visualization. Rather, as a group we decided to continue to work individually and come back together to discuss our



tegtmeyer_margin.jpg



margin_exp1.psd



erinwhite_round2.jpg

john_2response.jpg

findings. I asked the participants to add on to, modify or subtract from, one of the visualizations from the first round—combining or intersecting that with their own writing and visualization to connect new meaning.

Conclusion

The dominant comments from the group was that the benefit of this type of interaction and collaboration was in the shared resources and the momentum that the dedicated time facilitated. The iterative process and the sharing of images and ideas at multiple stages of the process also helped participants make new connections to both the content and how the content might be visualized. They did comment that they made new connections to the material and generally enjoyed the working



environment. One limitation to the online environment was the difficulty of engaging in real time collaboration (though this charrette was not necessarily structured to have multiple hands manipulating a single file.)

Ultimately, this charrette provoked important conversations about the nature of collaboration, especially as it related to scale, authorship and outcome. The outline of this charrette was designed more as a reactive group project than a true collaboration, and in many ways it was a project born out of tacit understanding of a collaborative process. The group work in this charrette was more focused on the generation of content—both written and visual—and less focused on the discourse, debate and generation of new content and ideas. In “Groupthink: The Brainstorming Myth”, social scientist Charlan Namath argues that “debate and criticism do not inhibit ideas but, rather, stimulate them relative to every other condition...because it encourages us to engage more fully with the work of others and to reassess our viewpoints.” (Lehrer). As the final projects were individually authored, the opportunities for discourse and dialogue were concentrated at the beginning of the project, with only sporadic interaction throughout. The majority of the discussion also took place around decision-making context (i.e. which ideas should we build on) rather than integrated into the conceptualization and making process. The investment in the individual work also seemed to be compounded, with more emphasis, focus and even dedication being given to the visual work. In this capacity, the levity and willingness to experiment seemed to diminish. The shift from individual work to shared discussion and visualization was also less successful in that the hesitancy to share the process—in the form of screen sharing or discussion—was more obvious in this second workshop than in the first. This potentially indicates an attachment to the product that decreases in a truly collaborative project. The decrease in this attachment could also indicate a willingness to take risks and try new things within the collaborative environment that doesn’t happen individually quite as readily. The participants in each of these workshops were different, so these observations can be ascribed to a number of different variables. Mostly, they are meant to provide a starting point for further investigation. As this workshop was held earlier in the sessions, it was a real driver of some of the conversation that began to arise regarding the definition and conditions for collaboration. Not only in the environment where they took place, but in the structure of the project, team and interaction.

References

Lehrer, Jonah. “Groupthink: The Brainstorming Myth” The New Yorker online, January 20, 2012 (http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/01/30/120130fa_fact_lehrer?currentPage=all)

- fig 1. brooke chornyak
- fig 2. liz green
- fig 3. rebecca tegtmeyer
- fig 4. lance barrera



fig 1.



fig 1.

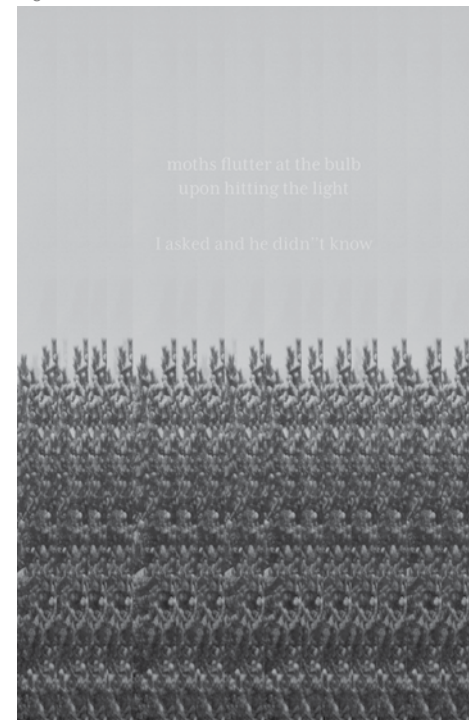


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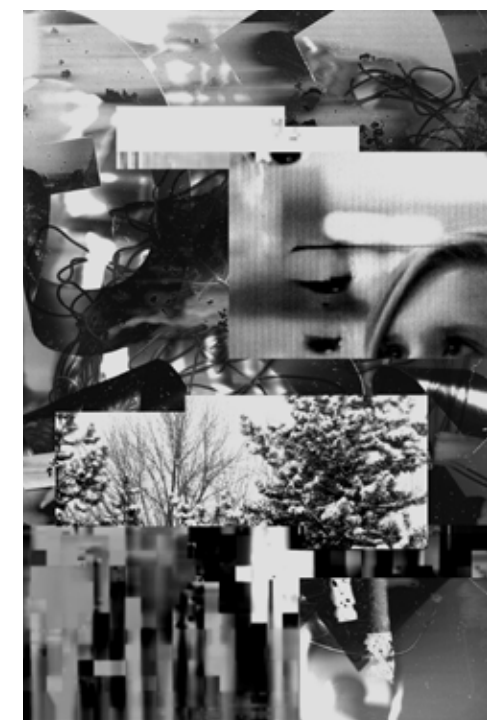


fig 1.

charette4: motion workshop

In second issue of Margin the editors established a series of workshops to explore and experiment with notions of collaboration within the digital environment. In this Charette No. 4 workshop colleagues and peers were invited to participate in a collaborative motion project. The project explored the various meanings and definitions of “collaboration” through multiple group discussions, expressive motion pieces, and ultimately a final motion piece that integrated moments from the other motion pieces.

As the initiator of the project, I was inspired by the previous collaborative workshops that resulted in exploratory design techniques and built on the discussions of collaboration. I was interested to test out “How would a collaborative process work to produce a time-based piece?”

A call for participation was sent out via email to various peers across the U.S. A total of seven people participated in the entire project; Peter Lusch (Lansing, Michigan), Jonathon Russell (Mount Pleasant, Michigan), Alberto Rigau (San Juan, Puerto Rico), Cat Normoyle (Memphis, Tennessee), Brooke Chornyak (Richmond, Virginia), Tania Allen (Raleigh, North Carolina), and myself (Lansing, Michigan).

Before the first group meeting, some considerations were taken into account to plan for the project constraints. It was determined that each participant was to create an individual piece therefore the duration and dimensions, time commitment for production and a plan to share the final results were set in place:

- an exported 640 X 480 .mov file
- no longer than 60 seconds
- Audio is optional
- Limit yourself to no more than 2 hours
- deliver movie file to a Dropbox folder

Since all participants had varying degrees of experience in the creation

of motion pieces, the methods and materials used for execution were open-ended and taking a typographic approach was suggested.

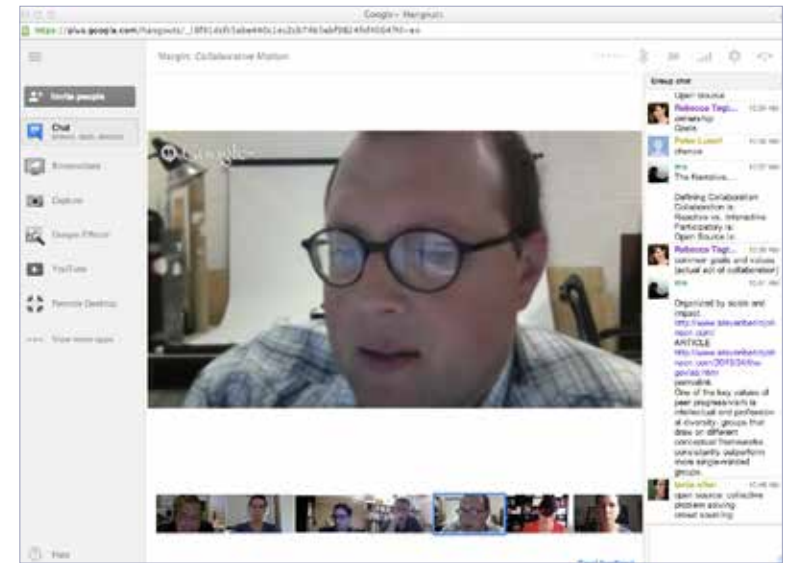


fig 1. peter lusch, google hangout screenshot

Group Meeting #1

Using Google Hangout, we had an initial meeting to discuss the end-goal of the project which was to achieve a “truly collaborative motion piece”. As the initiator of the project I wanted to ensure an equal playing field for the project and not act in the role of leader or instructor. We began by discussing the process of which we would create a collaborative motion piece and confirmed that producing individual motion pieces would be the first step in the making process. We also determined that we would each respond to the phrase, “collaboration is...” and produce short motion pieces to eventually be compiled into one final piece. The question then resided with who or how would we facilitate the selection and editing process of these individual pieces into a greater narrative.

This led us to recap and build on previous conversations about what “collaboration” truly is. We covered a list of topics related to the subject and set out to categorize ideas into a “narrative” from which we could work from. We verbally shared these ideas while simultaneously placing them in the google chat sidebar. Some of the ideas and topics included:

Reactive vs. Interactive
Scale / Spectrum / Impact
Ownership and Authorship
Virtual vs. Real
Participatory
Open Source
Common Goals and Values
motivation
individual goals vs. collective goals
collaboration as an action verb
open source as a space
collective problem solving

At the conclusion of the meeting we agreed to further explore these topics on our own through the production of 60 second clips that cover as many of the topics as we could.

Individual Motion Creation

The individual motion pieces spanned a range of ideas and methods; approached through a unique lens, resulting in a diverse range of outcomes; illustrated, literal, in between, demonstrative, suggestive. Some chose to work conceptually, develop a narrative, and collaborate with another person. Aesthetically the work spanned handwritten text to digital typography, to video of objects and people in action.



fig 2. screen shots of individual motion pieces

After each piece was completed, the participants shared their movie in a Dropbox folder that the entire group had access to. All participants were encouraged to view each piece before the next Google Hangout meeting.

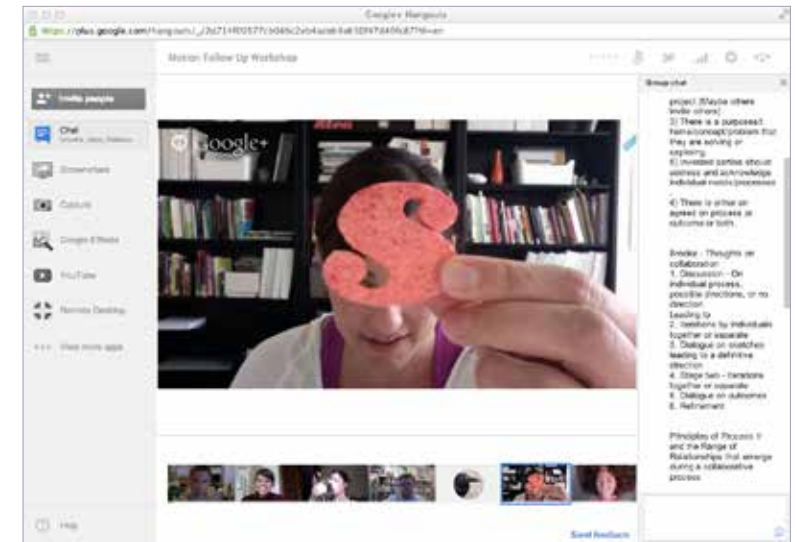


fig 3. rebecca tegtmeyer, google hangout screenshot, holding up "s"

Group Meeting #2

During this follow-up meeting we began by sharing our individual processes for creation. Here are a few examples from some of the participants:

Peter Lusch: I went for a narrative approach - sketching - getting yourself into a process. What could this become? With the capacity of others?

Johnathon Russell: I spent the whole time thinking about what I wanted to do. I set a limit, executed it, thought about the project much longer.

Alberto Rigau: Was working towards the end goal and thinking about the mixing of the video.

Discussions of how to compile these into one complete narrative ensued as well as further discussions of what collaboration is, the goal of the compiled video, who the audience is, and limitations of the project. The considerations for development were:

—continuing to work in isolation and then come back together to work again

- create segments that frame the work, much like the format of a book
- agree upon a narrative structure
- Rebecca (the initiator of the project) responds with her own video
- the video becomes an outline for a written component

In the end we surveyed each other based on personal interests within the greater context of the Margin journal, we divided into two groups, those that wanted to begin a written component and those that wanted to participate in the compilation and completion of a final motion piece that captured the essence of collaboration.

Smaller Group Video Editing #1

Peter Lusch, Alberto Rigau, and myself took on the next collaborative task; compile the individual motion pieces into a larger narrative. A major limitation to beginning this type of “video editing” work is that there is a lack of technological tools that facilitate an online video editing environment which would allow for multiple users to work on the same piece at the same time. A benefit to our situation was that Peter and myself were in the same location, enabling us to meet in a single physical space and huddle together around two dual computer screens. Alberto is located in Puerto Rico so we had to think about how we were going to do this together. Using Google Hangouts we enabled the screen share option. This way, all three of us could view the pieces at the same time. We began by reviewing each piece and identifying the main topic or topics covered in the piece, some pieces had multiple ideas at play while others just had one. We listed all the ideas and organized them into a sequence from which to work from. Peter and I worked in AfterEffects to edit and splice the specific moments together while Alberto watched on his screen. Alberto’s familiarity with the AfterEffects interface aided in his understanding of the activities taking place. As a group we made decisions to layer ideas, work with opaque transitions, and include audio at the beginning and end.

Group Meeting #3

After completion of the compiled video it was shared with the larger group via Vimeo (accessed with a password). The larger group had a chance to view the video before we met online. The intent of meeting was to discuss possible changes and receive feedback. No critique prompts were given, making it difficult to have a productive discussion about the piece. We concluded that working from a set of critique questions would be best.

Following this meeting, I drafted critique questions and sent them



fig 4. peter lusch, sketchbook page

out to the larger group via email. The questions are as follows:

- as it is now there is audio from Brooke’s piece at the beginning and the end, shall it remain as is? Be silent throughout? Or incorporate another piece of audio? If so, what?
- are there any comments specific to timing of certain moments?
- are there any suggestions for changing the sequence?
- is everyone and all ideas represented equally?

Smaller Group Video Editing #2

After the answers were received, Peter and I reviewed the feedback and made minor edits. There were suggestions for more significant changes, but we felt those suggestions were large enough that they would have required a discussion with the larger group. These suggestions involved a reordering to the sequence of ideas, which would alter the narrative already set in place. Due to time constraints, the video remains as it was with the first editing draft.

Workshop Reflection

This workshop was facilitated as a means to test out a collaborative motion project that takes place in the digital environment. There were no set expectations for the process or the final outcomes. It proved to be a successful



fig 5. screenshots of final video

experiment as it brought forward possible answers for some questions as well as generated more inquiry. The workshop also revealed some holes in the technological tools currently available for editing and collaborative purposes.

Questions of leadership, authorship, and scale were immediately brought forward when the workshop was introduced. Although I was the facilitator of the workshop, I didn't want to take on the role of the leader. The natural evolution of collaborative endeavours did present the situation in which a team is best served by the guide of a leader. In this "unofficial" role I stepped back and let the group deliberate and share possible ways of working through the test at hand. I then framed to the group a direction to take based on the discussions. The decision was made to work individually, separate from the others in the group, to create multiple perspectives on what collaboration is. This was a decision based on proximity in location and time. Location became the first obstacle that hindered the process of this project. Due to all group members being dispersed around the U.S., working individually made for an easier way to begin the project. Given the opportunity for all of us to meet in-person, the results could have been purely collaborative. One group member did reach out and work with someone else that resided in her physical location. This resulted in another group member, but not someone engaged in the core

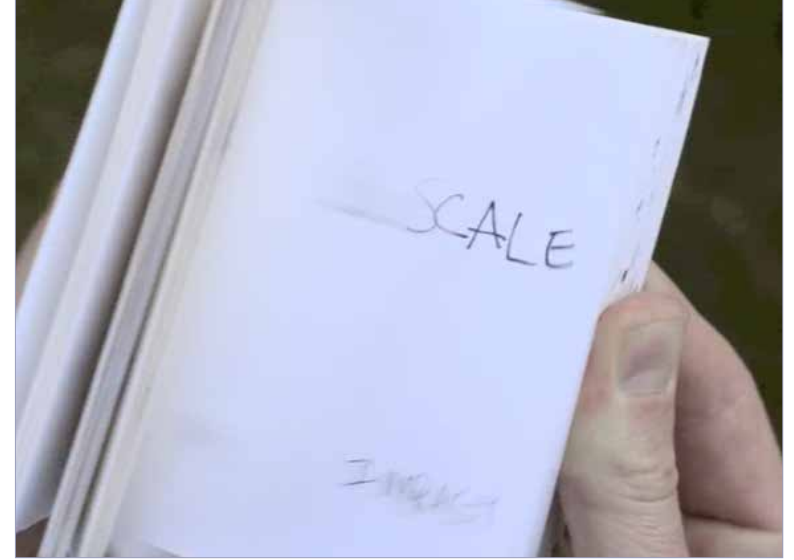


fig 5. screenshots of final video

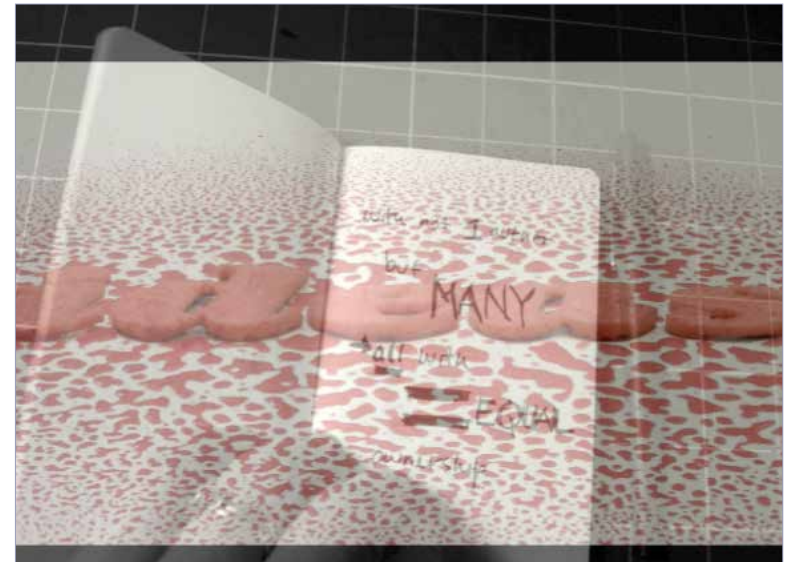


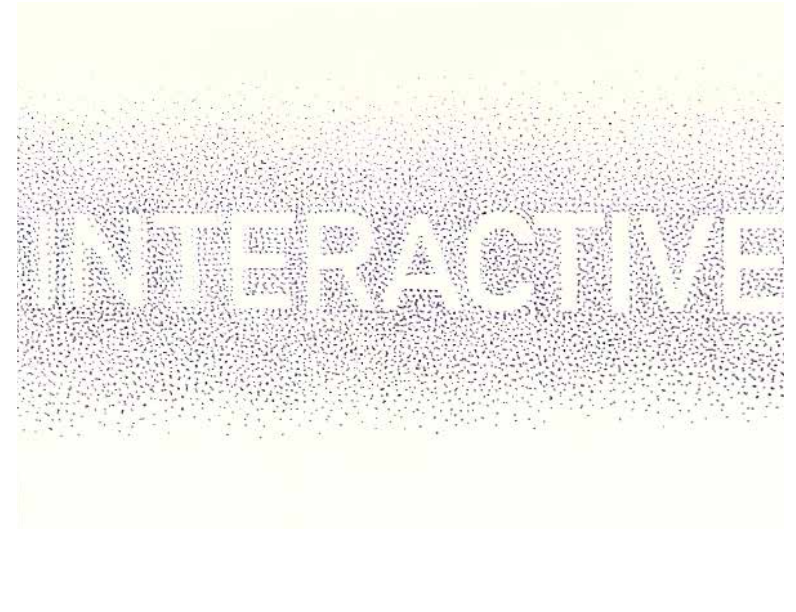
fig 5. screenshots of final video

collaborative group. This created another level of collaboration to consider outside of the core group and the facilitator, perhaps one of affiliation and minimal participation? This leads to more questions regarding authorship; who owns the project, the process, and the outcomes, both the individual pieces and the edited piece that combined clips from those pieces? Is it the group? If so, who are the group members and how should participants be acknowledged?

These questions spurred more inquiry into notions of scale as this aspect became an obvious obstacle in the project as well. Scale, in this sense, refers to the scope of the project as well as the number of people involved in the process. Approaching the beginning step of the project individually enabled the group to focus on a singular perspective, as the scale initially presented in the workshop was too large to approach as a cohesive group.

Finally, aspects of technology played a large part in the execution of the project. This was two-fold; the technology programs and tools available for group editing in the online context as well as the level of expertise and familiarity with the programs that are commonly used in editing. Because of both of these points, the group shifted in scale once again to edit and compile the individual motion outcomes. The three participants at this phase of the project were familiar with After Effects and could continue the collaboration with ease. Also two participants at this phase were in the same location working on one file, while another participated via video screen-sharing. The only way he was able to participate at this level was because of his previous knowledge of the program's interface. He was able to communicate accurately about possible directions before he needed to leave this phase of the process. This ended with two people, in the same location, editing one final piece.

If I were to lead this workshop a second time, I would approach it with more directive individual and group prompts. This would be to accommodate the flux in scale necessary to complete this type of project. Given the goal of the workshop, to create a collaborative motion piece, a certain sensitivity to the technical skills required could be confronted up front and specific tasks within the project could be assigned to the appropriate team members.



Margin: an experimental design journal

c. 2014

Thanks to the contributors for your time, effort and patience in this endeavor. We hope it was worth the effort, because we couldn't have done it without you!

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